

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan.

Report of the Executive Director of People to Cabinet.

(12th July 2017)

ACCESS TO EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES THROUGH FAMILY CENTRES

1. Purpose of report

To provide Cabinet with an overview of how families have accessed Early Help through Family Centres since the launch of the new model on the 1st April 2016.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

3. Introduction

On the 9th September 2015, Cabinet agreed to implement a new model of Early Help for families through a network of Family Centres, supporting children pre-birth to 19 years old (25 years old if the young person has a disability) and their families. This ensured that the Council achieved the Future Council saving of £2.5 million during the period April 2015/16.

The Family Centre service has built on strengths, expertise and infrastructure of the Children's Centres programme to ensure that:

- Family Centres provide a range of Early Help services for families with children pre-birth to 19 years old (25 years old if the young person has a disability) through a streamlined pathway
- Services include support with physical and emotional health, practical advice on keeping children safe, developing social networks through groups, support with education and learning, parenting, positive family routines, home and money, work, training and volunteering
- Family Centres are based in areas where there is a high level of need with the continuation of some services for all families delivered in partnership with health and education
- Family Centres are aligned to Area Councils
- Services work in a whole family way and are targeted according to need with a focus on early intervention and prevention. This is underpinned by a strengths based approach building family resilience and aspirations
- Family Centres are non stigmatised gateways to service for all families in their local community recognising that targeted interventions and outreach services are vital in supporting families who need it most in order to narrow the gap in outcomes between those experiencing the most disadvantage and the rest

Overarching Themes

The report provides Cabinet with data and information on a borough wide and area basis and provides detail relating to the following overarching themes:

- Overall high numbers of children, young people and families are accessing early help through Family Centres and the Targeted Youth Support service with the greatest number of families

having children in the 5 to 11 years old age range. This is a positive development as this age range was not largely provided for by the Children's Centre programme

- Early help activity initiated and led by a range of agencies has increased since the 1st April 2016, the introduction date of the new model of early help through Family Centres including the borough wide co-ordination by this service
- Over 1000 referrals have been received through the Early Help Panel (Family Centres and Targeted Youth Support service) leading to extra support to families as part of a Team around the Family as a result of a thorough Early Help Assessment and active Early Help Plan
- The step down arrangements with Children's Social Care has been strengthened to support families to sustain the gains they have made during a statutory intervention
- Weekly professional early help and social care consultation has been implemented along with health to provide support and guidance to early help practitioners to ensure that families receive the right support at the right time and further embed understanding of thresholds
- Clear governance arrangements are in place through local Family Centre Advisory Boards aligned to Area Councils and borough wide through the Early Help Steering Group for Children and Families which reports to the Stronger Communities Partnership. The steering group also provides reports to the Children and Young People's Trust and Barnsley Safeguarding Children's Board. There is a strategic fit with the recently approved All Age Early Help Strategy 2017/2020.
- A performance management framework is in place with multi-agency partners which continues to be developed to ensure there is an evidence base of impact using short, medium and long term indicators. This information is used as a basis on which agencies are holding each other to account, including quality assurance through multi-agency audit.
- A multi-agency workforce development programme has been implemented and continues to be developed including the introduction of Early Help Champions

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

The purpose of the report is to enable Cabinet to review the progress and impact made by the new model of Early Help to children, young people and families through Family Centres.

5. Proposal and justification

The information in the main body of the report is largely borough wide. For a breakdown per area, please see Appendix 1.

Access to Early Help through Family Centres (including services offered through the Targeted Youth Support Service).

It is evident that families continue to engage with services delivered through Family Centres and it is notable that the highest rate of registrations are for families with children aged 5 to 12 years. Focused work is being undertaken in partnership with secondary schools to engage with families with teenagers, notwithstanding that young people do choose to self refer to the Targeted Youth Support service.

Family Centre Registrations at end of Q4 2016/17 (the number of registrations are taken at a point in time and not cumulative)	0 to 4 years	5 to 12 years	13 to 19 Years (25 years if the young person has a disability)	Total
Catchment Area				
Dearne	959	1257	379	
Central	1643	1659	458	
North	1068	1203	340	
North East	1423	1708	381	
South and Penistone	1042	1224	216	
Total	6,135	7,051	1,774	14,960

In addition to children and young people reached through Family Centres an integral part of the offer is through the Targeted Youth Support service where young people can access Early Help through targeted group provision and as part of a team around the family.

	Young People Registrations at end of Q4 2016/17	Young People Attendances at end of Q4 2016/17
Catchment Area		
Dearne	358	4449
Central	546	3293
North	245	1814
North East	316	7772
South and Penistone	1081	12875
Borough wide service (Targeted Groups in Schools and Learning Disabilities/Delay)	541	3327
Total	3,087	33,530

Access by type of Early Help for families

Families registering with Family Centres can access a range of group/programme based services which allows for greater efficiencies in supporting a larger number of families as part of a group as well as developing positive peer support networks. In addition, families who may need more tailored support from a number of agencies, a team around the family is formed. Broadly Early Help can be categorised as:

Outreach: reaching out to ensure engagement with children and families experiencing the most disadvantages that may not self refer or find services easy to access

Health: evidence based provision including Having a Baby, Baby Massage, Healthy Start, Infant Feeding Support, Cook and Eat, Healthy Lifestyles and Physical activity and Busy Feet.

Work and Finance: evidence based provision including Journey to Work and Adult Learning

Family Support and Parenting: evidence based provision including parenting programmes e.g. Webster Stratton, Solihull and family support as a team around the family

Engagement: including participation and influence e.g. parent/carer forums

Access by type of Early Help through Family Centres at the end of quarter 4 2016/17

Type	Families
Outreach	4055
Health	2263
Work and Finance	549
Family Support and Parenting	2094
Engagement	1819
Total	10,780

Access by type of Early Help for young people through the Targeted Youth Support Service

Young people registering with the Targeted Youth Support service access a range of targeted groups within localities and borough wide through schools and a specific service for young people with Learning Disabilities/Delay. The data below does not include the young people who are involved in the Youth Council and vote in the Make Your Mark campaign every year. Early help for young people is categorised by the following curriculum areas:

Be Healthy:

- Physical health (fitness, healthy lifestyles, sports leadership accredited courses)
- Mental and emotional health (self awareness, esteem and image, emotional support, stress management, tools and techniques, Motiv8 programme)
- Sexual health (contraceptive advice, sexually transmitted disease screening, access to health services, adolescent development, relationship and assertion, sexual responsibility)

Stay Safe:

- Signposting to support agencies, internet safety e.g. CEOP resource and education
- Risky behaviours, safety and emergency services
- Safe from bullying and discrimination including awareness, education and support

Enjoy and Achieve:

- Personal and social development and positive recreation time e.g. practical activities, trips and visits, teamwork skills, communication, interaction, social and interpersonal skills
- Life skills, cooking, money handling
- Support, information and guidance
- Accredited awards e.g. I Know I Can, Sports Leadership, John Muir Award (outdoor education)

Make a Positive Contribution:

- Engagement in decision making and support for the community and environment e.g. voice and influence activity, citizenship, campaigning, democracy through the Youth Council structure
- Engagement in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school e.g. volunteering programmes, peer mentoring, environmental improvements, restorative justice programmes

Economic Wellbeing:

- Access and referral to other services e.g. Targeted Information, Advice and Guidance, benefits, housing, homelessness
- Ready for employment and the world of work e.g. independent living skills, budgeting, CV and interviewing skills, preparation for learning and work.

Access by type of Early Help through the Targeted Youth Support service at the end of quarter 4 2016/17

Type	Young People Attendances at end of Q4 2016/17
Be Healthy	10,595
Stay Safe	6376
Enjoy and Achieve	8187
Make a Positive Contribution	7044
Economic Wellbeing	1328
Total	33,500

In addition to the provision of targeted groups, the Targeted Youth Support service is responsible for undertaking the return home interviews as part of the borough wide provision relating to children missing from home or care. 186 return home interviews were conducted with children as at quarter 3 of 2016/17.

Access to Early Help Family Support as part of a team around the family

Family Centres and the Targeted Youth Support service are key partners in the delivery of early help where a team around the family is required to meet some of the complex challenges faced by some families. Through the streamlined Early Help pathway agencies can refer for extra Early Help support for children, young people and families where a specific role for the Family Centre or Targeted Youth Support service has been identified. In order to manage this effectively an Early Help Panel was established on the 1st April 2016 where partner agencies refer for specific family support through Family Centres or the Targeted Youth Support service.

Since it was established until the end of quarter 3 2016/17, the Early Help Panel has received 1060 referrals from partner agencies.

In addition, through strengthened step down arrangements with Children's Social Care, Family Centres are key partners in ensuring that families sustain the gains they have achieved following Social Care intervention and support. The step down protocol has been piloted with an official launch of the final agreement in April 2017 where data will be collated to develop understanding of the impact of the new arrangements.

Co-ordination of Early Help Assessments and Plans

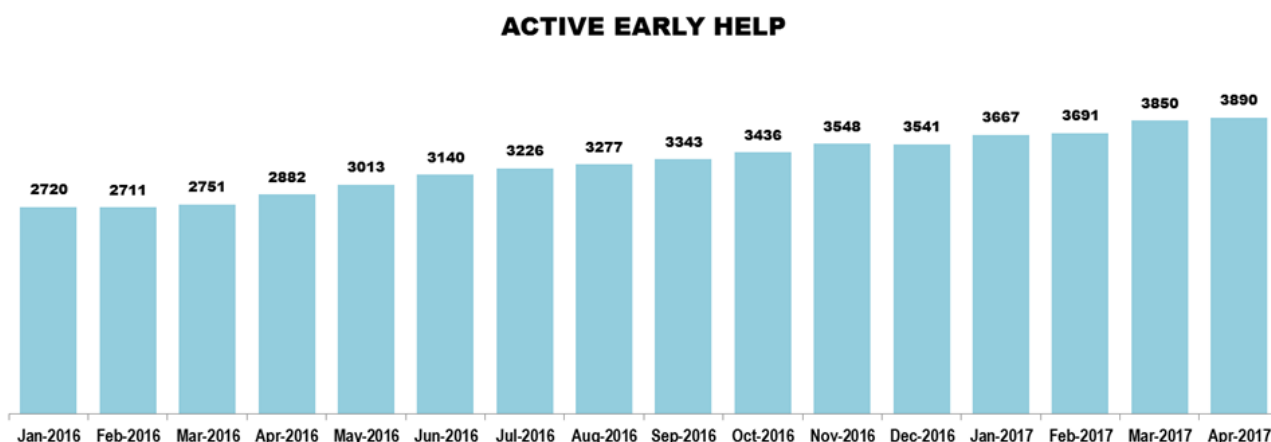
On the 16th March 2016 the Early Start and Families service became responsible for the borough wide co-ordination of Early Help Assessments and Plans on behalf of partner agencies. Early Help is the responsibility of all agencies across Barnsley and whilst Family Centres and the Targeted Youth Support service are direct deliverers of Early Help the service also co-ordinates the Early Help activity generated by other agencies. The multi-agency Early Help Steering Group for Children and Families has worked towards an agreed action plan, stemming from an independent peer review, in order to further improve, collaborate and hold each other to account for performance and outcomes.

Children's Social Care previously held this responsibility and as part of the transfer the service has reviewed and updated the framework for co-ordination including:

- Tracking of Early Help Assessments and Plans
- Performance management and quality assurance
- Workforce development
- Information, advice and guidance including the web based Early Help Toolkit
- Communications and raising the profile and understanding of Early Help
- Development of Early Help champions

- Strengthened arrangements with Children’s Social Care including step down and weekly professional consultation open to all agencies

There has been increase in multi-agency Early Help activity across the borough when considering the number of Early Help Assessments and plans initiated and progressed. This provides targeted one to one support to families who need additional support as part of a team around the family.



One of the key aims of the service is to increase, encourage, support and challenge agencies to ensure that they undertake their own role as part of the partnership delivering Early Help to families. To support this, during the last 12 months work has been undertaken with BMBC Performance to develop more granular reporting of Early Help activity including an analysis of which agencies are initiating Early Help Assessments, pulling together a team around the family and progressing active plans focused on achieving positive short, medium and long term outcomes. See Appendix 1 for the number of Early Help Assessments initiated by agency during the period 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017. Family Centres (524) along with Primary Schools (703) are the agencies leading the most Early Help Assessments and plans with Health Visitors (102) and the Family Intervention Service 82) the next greatest instigator.

A further focus of analysis is the inter-relationship between Early Help and statutory interventions led by Children’s Social Care. Early indications suggest that since the launch of the new model on the 1st April 2016 there has been an increase in Early Help activity and a decrease in children subject to statutory interventions however this needs further analysis over a longer period.

Data as at 8th March 2017.

Age of children	0-5 years	6+ years	All children
Children on Child Protection Plans	133	122	255
Children that are deemed Child In Need	409	716	1125
Children with Early Help Assessments	1716	2121	3837
Children Looked After	87	203	290

Making a Difference – Governance and Performance Management

Family Centre Advisory Boards receive detailed data and intelligence regarding children and families in their community including key demographics. This data, coupled with local intelligence, is used to set local targets and forms the basis of the Self Evaluation Framework and action plan. The multi-agency Advisory Boards are the main vehicle for providing local support and challenge to

Family Centres in order to ensure that performance targets are met and outcomes for children and families achieved.

As Early Help is every agency's business, the governance arrangements extend to multi-agency partnerships across the borough. The Early Help Steering Group for Children and Families reports to the Stronger Communities Partnership as well as the Barnsley Children's Safeguarding Board and Trust Executive Group. The Early Help Steering Group is accountable for the delivery of the multi-agency action plan a key strand of which is performance management.

From the 1st April 2016 the group has worked to develop a framework to drive improvements and ensure a positive impact on outcomes. This enables agencies to better align resources and fulfil their commitment to constructively hold each other to account. At each steering group meeting an Early Help performance report is shared which includes data in relation to Early Help Assessments and Plans. This has been continuously improved over the year 2016/17 and is now being effectively used to better understand Early Help in Barnsley and how to best maximise impact and outcomes. This report largely focuses on quantitative measures and activity which may lead to key lines of enquiry or investigations as a group. For example most recently the group agreed to undertake a deep dive in their own respective organisation as to the pattern of Early Help activity and Children's Social Care interventions in relation to three areas of the borough.

As part of developing a performance management framework the group has considered how best to develop an understanding of longer term measures of the impact of Early Help and agreed a quarterly report which focused on bell weather indicators including:

- Attendance in primary schools and secondary schools
- Persistent absence in primary and secondary schools
- Number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment and training (NEETs)
- Take-up rate of two year old entitlement
- Troubled families - number of families engaged as a proportion of total target number of families and number of families demonstrating significant and sustained improvement
- Number of children who are school ready as measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage profile
- Number of fixed term exclusions expressed as a % of primary and secondary school population
- Number of primary and secondary with 1 or more fixed term exclusions as a % of school population
- First time entrants to the Youth Justice system (aged 10-17 – rate per 10,000)
- Number of contacts to Children's Social Care
- Rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10,000 population under 18
- % of Children's Social Care referrals going on to assessment
- % of Children's Social Care assessments ending in no further action
- % of re-referrals (in last 12 months) to Children's Social Care

Quality is assessed through multi-agency audits which from 2017 will form part of the mainstream programme of audit under the Barnsley Safeguarding Children's Board. Following the audit's undertaken by the group; an action plan is agreed and monitored through the steering group. The focus of audits during 2016/17 has included:

- Cases that were referred to Children's Social Care but were deemed not to have met the threshold for Social Care intervention
- Quality of Early Help Assessments
- Cases stepping down from Social Care

All Early Help cases with an assigned Family Centre, Family Support Worker conduct a case closure summary similar to a case study which identifies learning points. The Early Help Steering Group has agreed following a trial in 2016/17 to share anonymised case summaries on a quarterly basis during 2017/18 in order to learn from best practice, identify areas for improvement and

develop a common understanding of what Early Help can constitute in its broadest sense. Where appropriate information gained from the case summary can also be used as part of the Early Help Communications Plan.

Measuring Distance Travelled by Families – Family Star Plus (see Appendix 2)

The Family Star has been used in Barnsley Children's Centres since 2012 and continues to be used in Family Centres and other services funded by the Troubled Families – Think Family programme. The Star has been instrumental in ensuring that practitioners work in a whole family way, taking a solution focused and strengths based approach. The Star enables the measurement of starting points for families, demonstrates the change that families make through an intervention and evidences the family's outcomes and distance travelled. It can also provide a focus for discussion where parents and professionals perceptions of starting points differ. The tool enables the service to measure, evidence and summarise change within families. The Star provides the opportunity to analyse and interpret data in order:

- to be outcome driven and to achieve better outcomes
- to improve the service and identify priority work areas in order to target resources in the right place
- to see the level of progress made by families accessing Early Help services through Family Centres
- to maximise and evidence impact and outcomes

The Family Star Plus, part of the suite of Outcomes Star, is underpinned by the assumption that positive growth is possible and realistic for families. It focuses on 10 core areas that have been found critical to enable children to thrive and as the system is web based it allows for the production of statistical data that can be used at a number of levels. The core areas of the Family Star are:

- Promoting good health
- Meeting emotional needs
- Keeping your child safe
- Social networks
- Supporting learning
- Setting boundaries
- Keeping a family routine
- Providing home and money
- Progress to Work
- Your Wellbeing

The Star is based upon a model of change which includes 5 stages:

1. Stuck
2. Aware
3. Trying
4. Finding out what works
5. Effective parenting

The Star has children and families at the centre of the process and it focuses on family strengths and indicates what steps they could take to progress. It is family friendly and empowers families as they are active participants in the process and importantly it provides a visual representation of progress. This does not replace the Early Help Assessment and Plan but adds value to the process and provides a tangible evidence base of change.

The service also uses the My Star (for children aged 5-11 years) and Teen Star (for teenagers) to enable a holistic approach to whole family working and assessments. The continued use of the Star enables the service to track distance travelled of individuals/families that receive interventions and ensure that families, young people and children's voices are captured in assessments and intervention measures.

6. Implications for local people / service users

Families and young people are able to access services based on assessed need in the community in a Family Centre main, linked or outreach site, I Know I can Centre or in a community venue and in the home where appropriate. Families, children and young people continue to be able to have a voice and influence service delivery through local Advisory Boards, Parent/Carer Forums and through a number of participation mechanisms specifically for young people.

7. Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

8. Employee implications

There are no direct employee implications as a result of this report.

9. Communications implications

There are no direct communication implications as a result of this report. The Early Help Steering Group for Children and Families however has a Communications Plan in order to raise awareness and understanding of Early Help.

10. Consultations

The Council completed a full statutory public consultation in relation to the proposed changes to the Children's Centre programme under Section 5D of the Childcare Act 2006.

11. List of appendices

- Appendix 1 Data by Area of Barnsley
- Appendix 2 Family Star Plus User Guide

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